

COATS ROSE

A Professional Corporation



Hon. Dwight E. Jefferson

Of Counsel, Retired State
District Judge

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Alternative Dispute

Resolution

Governmental Relations

Litigation

Public Finance Law

Transportation



Judge Jefferson is Of Counsel with Coats Rose and a retired State District Judge (215th District Court of Harris County, Texas). He has over 25 years of litigation experience, beginning as an in-house counsel for Liberty Mutual Insurance Company. He has been a certified mediator since 1997, and an American Arbitration Association approved arbitrator since 2006. The Judge currently holds an AV Peer Review rating from Martindale-Hubbell. This is his second tenure with Coats Rose, having been a litigation associate and Director from 1988, until his appointment to the bench by then Governor George W. Bush in 1995.

Practice Emphasis

The Judge has represented clients in the litigation of personal injury, commercial, class action, environmental, employment and election cases. He has also served as an expert witness in state and federal courts on judicial issues, reasonableness of verdicts, and attorney fees in personal injury, commercial, construction, insurance and mass tort cases.

The Judge has served as Ad Litem and Special Master, in Harris County State Courts, and as an arbitrator on cases involving employment discrimination, construction disputes, commercial contracts, non-compete agreements, class actions, asbestos settlement trust, and municipal annexation. He has also mediated hundreds of cases involving personal injury, medical malpractice, construction, environmental, employment discrimination and breach of contracts.

The Judge's experience in Public Finance and Governmental Affairs arises from his appointment by the Mayor of Houston to the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) Board of Directors and his supervision as Chair of the Finance/Audit Committee over the \$500 million METRO bond issue in Fall 2011 and management of METRO's annual Contractual Obligation bonds for bus purchases.

The Judge also served as a member of the Mayor's transition team on the Committee that conducted interviews and recommended appointment of the Presiding Judge of the City of Houston Municipal Courts.



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Education

- University of Texas School of Law (J.D., 1983)
- University of Texas (B.A., Government, 1978)
- A.A. White Dispute Resolution Center, University of Houston Law Center (Certified International Arbitrator 2006)

Admitted

- Texas, 1984
- U.S. District Court of Texas, Southern, Eastern and Western Districts
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Circuit
- U.S. District Court of Pennsylvania, Middle District
- U.S. District Court of Alabama, Southern District
- U.S. District Court of Kentucky, Western District

Affiliations

- State Bar of Texas
- State Bar of Texas Pattern Jury Committee, Member
- Houston Bar Association
- American Arbitration Association (Commercial, Employment, Construction, Complex Litigation, Mass Torts, Class Action Panelist)
- National Arbitration Forum (Neutral)
- American Diabetes Association (Houston Chapter Board of Directors and Chairman Elect)
- Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County Board of Directors, Chair Finance / Audit Committee
- American Board of Trial Advocates

Representative Decisions

- While the Presiding Judge of the 215th Civil Judicial District of Harris County, Texas, presided over the \$1.3 billion jury verdict in a commercial fraud lawsuit by a Russian immigrant inventor against investors in the marine company he founded, and against his law firm.
- Presided over the first lawsuit to enforce the Texas Solid Waste Disposal Act involving tetrachloroethylene (perc). This case, and Judge Jefferson's rulings, were matters of first impression by a Texas court. The issue was finally resolved by the Texas Supreme Court.

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Representative Cases

- Served as co-counsel representing approximately 4,000 Plaintiffs in an environmental contamination case against the City of Jacksonville, Florida, and its insurers, which settled for \$25 Million.
- Served as co-counsel on litigation of radiation contamination case in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, involving approximately 2,000 clients which settled with ExxonMobil for \$8 Million.
- Represented the manager of the recording artist Destiny's Child in 2002 defending him and his companies in multi-million dollar litigation brought by 2 former group members and the estate of the deceased co-manager of the group.
- Representative Expert Witness Experience:
- Served as an expert witness in multi-million dollar litigation involving a major private trust where he provided expert testimony regarding matters related to injunctive relief available to the Plaintiffs.
- Served as an expert witness in an insurance coverage case arising from the settlement of a case involving the wrongful death of a nursing home resident, and provided testimony regarding the reasonableness of the settlement as it related to the apportionment of the settlement amount between actual damages and punitive damages.

Representative Ad Litem Experience

- Served as ad litem in the first fen-phen pharmaceutical case to go to trial in Harris County.
- Served as ad litem in cases involving sexual assault of a child.
- Representative Special Master Experience
- Served as a special master in a shareholder's class action case against a Canadian corporation and in a case involving an attorney's fees dispute arising from a multi-million dollar verdict in a fraud and breach-of-contract case brought by a Mexican company against Wal-Mart.